



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES  
P.O. BOX 12233  
RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. 27709

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Department of Genetics  
School of Medicine  
Stanford University  
Stanford, CA 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

Thank you for your note and the additional information about Dr. Smith.

I have given considerable thought to the program we discussed, with particular attention to the appropriate mechanism for accomplishing your objectives and ours. Upon reflection, it is clear that a core Center grant would not be appropriate. Our core Centers generally are designed to stabilize a cadre of scientists in environmental health science with substantial ongoing research in the area. Very little "start-up" funds are provided and this seems to be a major part of your plans.

I believe the Program Project mechanism is the best approach for initiating the program we discussed. As you know, program project grants are designed to support the actual research projects described in the application. Center grants, by contrast, support the organization or core. As I understand it, you propose to begin a program with three major facets: (1) mutagenesis test system development, (2) Dr. Smith's project on the chemistry of mutagens, and (3) a project on population genetics and extrapolation.

I would recommend that you and your colleagues develop specific individual proposals in each of these areas, much as you would individual grant applications, then combine them into a unified program project with you as principal investigator. With you as principal investigator, the lack of faculty status of Dr. Smith would be no problem.

Program project grants provide some core funds in addition to direct research funds. The core funds are analogous to those in Center grants, except that they are provided for support of central administration and facilities rather than salaries. Salary requests are assigned to specific projects.

If approved with a fundable priority, such a program project would enable you to initiate the work you outlined. In time, the program could be enlarged through supplements as you add new staff and research projects. With suitable growth and diversity, it might be appropriate at some time in the future to consider again the possibility of a core Center.

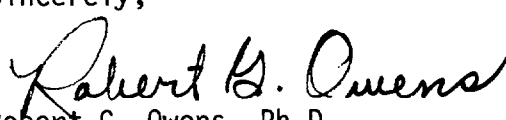
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I am enclosing a draft of a document we are preparing, which describes NIEHS Program Project grants. As indicated, this is still in preparation and will undoubtedly be changed considerably, but I believe it will be helpful until we can get the final document to you.

To sum up my feelings, the research you described to us is of interest and would appear to fit into and add to the mutagenesis program of the Institute. It would not appear that your program in mutagenesis is developed to a point where a Center grant would be appropriate, but a program project for direct support of the proposed projects, plus some core support for administrative and facilities costs, would appear to be a distinct possibility. Thus, I would encourage you to think along these lines in your planning.

I would appreciate having your reaction to this and if you have questions or feel that I can be of assistance at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert G. Owens". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Robert G. Owens, Ph.D.  
Scientist Administrator

1 Enclosure